

AN ATLAS OF MUSCLE PATHOLOGY IN NEUROMUSCULAR DISEASES. By J. Godwin Greenfield, M.D., G. Milton Shy, M.D., Ellsworth C. Alvord, jun., M.D., and Leonard Berg, M.D. (Pp. ix + 104; figs. 87. 45s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1957.

THIS is an important and useful attempt to clarify one of the most unsatisfactory and difficult aspects of morphological pathology. Of great value to the pathologist, it will also inform neurologists and physicians of the place and limitations of biopsy diagnosis.

As the authors point out, much difficulty is caused by the use of terms, such as necrosis, degeneration, and inflammation, which, when applied to muscle, have no clear or generally accepted meaning. The first ten chapters are therefore devoted to a purely objective description of the histopathological changes seen with ordinary techniques in muscle. These are illustrated by photo-micrographs in both colour and monochrome, which, with very few exceptions, do really advance the descriptions.

In the second part the authors attempt to describe with what clinical entities the reactions are associated. Avoiding such terms as myopathy, myositis, and muscular dystrophy, which have variable definitions, they recognize distal muscular syndromes of definite and possible neurogenic basis, myotonic syndromes, including dystrophia myotonica, myotonia congenita, and para-myotonia congenita, proximal muscle syndromes which include many cases now designated myositis and muscular dystrophy, and finally myasthenia gravis. They are forced to conclude that no single change has been found specific for any disease, and even combinations of changes are no more than highly suggestive.

It is evident that nothing useful will result from muscle biopsies unless both physicians and pathologists appreciate the limitations and the need for correlation of clinical and histological observations. In all such studies this book will be a useful guide. J. E. M.

THE LIVER: SOME PHYSIOLOGICAL AND CLINICAL ASPECTS. Volume 13, No. 2, of British Medical Bulletin. (Pp. 75-152; illustrated. 20s.) London: The British Council, 1957.

THIS will probably prove to be one of the most popular numbers of this bulletin. It supports the contention of Sir Harold Himsworth in the introduction that neither study of the normal nor study of the abnormal can alone supply the full information required for the comprehension of either.

The survey is admittedly limited to some aspects only, but develops logically from papers on biochemistry, the circulation in the liver, and response to injury by both toxic agents and nutritional deficiency to clinical papers on infective hepatitis, hæmochromatosis, hepatolenticular degeneration, and aspects of liver failure. Several large volumes have recently been published on this subject, but within a reasonable compass this number succeeds in presenting the more actively advancing aspects of the subject in a manner acceptable to non-specialist readers.

CUNNINGHAM'S MANUAL OF PRACTICAL ANATOMY. Volume I. Revised by J. C. Brash, M.C., M.A., M.D., D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.C.S.(Ed.), F.R.S.E. Twelfth Edition. (Pp. xii + 394; figs. 196. 25s.) London: Oxford University Press, 1957.

THE appearance of the first volume of a new edition of this well-known and popular manual after nine years is an event to be welcomed. The general arrangement of the subject matter into three volumes dealing respectively with the limbs, trunk and head, and neck will be as previously, but the order of dissection is altered to meet the demands for greater flexibility in this matter. Thus, the body is no longer to be placed in the lithotomy position for the first dissections, as the perineum will be dealt with after dissection of the abdomen. This process of modernisation might well have been extended. For example, the great importance of the hand and foot could be stressed at a time when the material is relatively fresh, and a more comprehensive picture of the limbs as appendages of the body would be obtained,

if the distal segments were examined early in the course of a rapid survey of the limbs. The traditional more detailed consideration of the parts should then be more readily comprehended by the student.

The English equivalent of the Paris Nomenclature of 1955 has been largely used throughout, although some of the more familiar terms of the Birmingham Revision have been retained alongside the newer terms; the index containing cross-references of the more important structures thus treated. New X-rays in "negative" form have been substituted for the "positives" of earlier editions, and some old text-illustrations have been replaced. The binding is now in a waterproof material which should be useful in a manual of this nature. This volume maintains the high standards of its predecessors, and can be recommended as a complete guide to the dissection of the limbs.

W. R. M. M.

AIDS TO PSYCHIATRIC NURSING. By A. Altschul, B.A.(Lond.), S.R.N., R.M.N.
(Pp. xii + 281. 8s. 6d.) London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1957.

TEXT-BOOKS of the Nurses' Aids Series have become so much a part of the equipment of the modern nurse that this addition will be welcomed, no doubt, since there has been a long-felt need for an up-to-date, comprehensive, and inexpensive text-book on mental nursing. As the authoress observes in the preface, "There has been much controversy about the scope and function of the mental nurse," and it would appear that her field of activity will change contour fairly rapidly in the next decade or so, in the light of therapeutic trends.

There is a need for literature that will assist the nurse towards a deeper understanding of her rôle, and a fuller appreciation of the needs of the patient, without encouraging her to become a pseudo-psychiatrist. This book, in my opinion, goes a long way towards helping the nurse in her search for a clearer knowledge of what is expected of her in an exacting career, and of how she can adopt herself to changing circumstances.

The entire subject is well covered, and the chapters on the classification and description of mental disorders are particularly lucid and well written.

The experienced nurse will probably find that there is little new in this book, but the presentation of material is original and thought-provoking.

The lack of illustrations detracts from the work; they could have been used to demonstrate the requirements for various physical treatments, and in other ways.

However, a wide and complex subject has been dealt with very adequately, and the fact that the phraseology is simple and there are few technical terms should appeal to the student at the commencement of training.

(We are indebted to Miss McGuinness, Matron of Purdysburn Hospital, for this review.)

A STUDENT'S HISTOLOGY. By H. S. D. Garven, B.Sc., M.D., F.R.S.E., F.R.F.P.S.G.
(Pp. xii + 650; illustrated. 55s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1957.

THE author of this new text on normal histology is an experienced teacher and, despite the size and the extensive and detailed descriptions, the volume does make a real attempt to guide the student to a useful understanding of one of the most difficult subjects of his curriculum. Any real appreciation of this subject requires more time than the curriculum can usually afford. To many, both students and practising physicians and surgeons, the subject seems devoid of value, and few students retain the unrelated facts which are provided in the older textbooks. By careful exposition and by line drawings, as well as by half-tone and colour illustrations, a very complete and lucid exposition of the fine structure of the body is presented. At times the descriptions are wearisome. The details of the glands of the skin, the layers of the bowel wall, the different tubules of the kidney, etc., are important and valuable to a complete understanding, but one feels that something more might have been done by different sizes of print, and perhaps by tabular summaries, to help the student who has little time and who, despite the clarity of the exposition, may still be in danger of failing to grasp the broad principles.